

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 remain pending in this application. Claims 18-53 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 1, 3, 6, 13, 16, and 17 have been amended to define more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. These changes have not been made for purposes relating to patentability. Claims 1, 16, and 17 are in independent form.

As an initial matter, Applicants note that the Office Action Summary indicates that Claims 11-13 stand withdrawn, as does paragraph 1 of the Office Action. However, the Office Action Summary also indicates that these claims are allowed, as does paragraph 10 of the Office Action. Applicants assume that Claims 11-13 are allowed.

Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of Claims 1-17. Although independent Claims 1, 16, and 17 have been amended, they are believed nevertheless to remain in condition for allowance.

The Office Action has required that Figs. 17A-D be labeled "PRIOR ART". The attached sheet of drawing includes changes to Figs. 17A-D, in that Figs. 17A-D have been so labeled. Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

The title has been amended to make it more descriptive, as required in the Office Action.

Claims 18-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2001/0002851 A1 to Shimada et al. Claims 38-40, 45, 46, 51, and 52 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious

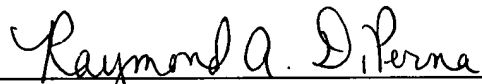
from U.S. Patent 6,041,143 to Chui et al. in view of U.S. Patent 5,978,514 to Yamaguchi et al.

Cancellation of Claims 18-26, 38-40, 45, 46, 51, and 52 renders the rejections of those claims moot.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Raymond A. DiPerna", is written over a horizontal line.

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